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Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

S P E E C H

....DELIVERED BY....

J. W. JOHNSON, F.C.A., M.P.P.,

In seconding the Address in Reply to the Speech from
the Throne at

Opening of the Ontario Legislature,

February 17th, 1909.

From the Belleville, Ontario, Intelligencer, February 19th, 1909.

Following is the full text of the maiden speech of Mr. J. W. Johnson, M.P.P. for West Hastings, made on Wednesday afternoon in the Ontario Legislature, in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Speech from the Throne:

MR. SPEAKER,—

It may be permitted to express on behalf of the members of the House our pleasure and satisfaction at the appointment of Col. Gibson to the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Province. By this appointment the many years of service rendered to the country by Col. Gibson are fittingly recognized. Throughout his public and private life the Governor has realized and has acted upon the principle that every man owes military service to the state, that he should be willing to give as well as receive protection. The Governor

may not be a policeman, as he declared on a famous occasion, but he is a representative Canadian soldier whom soldiers delight to honor.

This is not the time for vituperation or recrimination, for trying our good friends, the enemy, and hanging them again. We all need forgiveness for lapses more or less serious. They are fellow-Canadians, let us hope for the best, and expect that their present state of probation, with this Government's good example constantly before them, and the awful exposure at Ottawa to contemplate, will prove salutary and beneficial to them and to us.

I must pay a personal tribute to the honored leader of the House, the party that is now entrusted with the administration of the affairs of this Province floundered in the wilderness of opposition, like the Israel-

ites of old, for over thirty years. Mr. Whitney was the Joshua that led them into the Land of Promise. He labored for nearly a decade without stint or pause to accomplish his purpose. He travelled between the Ottawa River and the Soo, addressed audiences in nearly every Riding in the Province, proved his mastery of its affairs, and convinced the people of his capacity and honesty. He achieved power, and after the test which time and opportunity afford, he is acclaimed by the people and honored by the Sovereign.

This session will likely be characterized by the calmness of victory and the tranquillity of success.

The return of the Government to power is as natural as the flower following the bud, the fruit following the blossom; the conditions which they established when contrasted with those which previously prevailed, made any other result impossible. The people recorded their approval of the Government's administration, its business-like handling of the affairs of the Province and their confidence in the capacity, fidelity and honesty of the Cabinet. The parallel of this action we see constantly in connection with incorporated companies doing business in a large way, where shareholders continue in office a Board of Directors who have served the company's interests faithfully and have made business successful.

It is not necessary, now to recount the acts of administration and the useful legislation that have been characteristic of this Government since its advent to power in 1905. These have been discussed in every constituency, with the result that a fresh mandate implying the encomium, "Well done, good and faithful servants," has been handed to Sir James Whitney and his colleagues. The Government's large majority will insure stability of policy and continuity of purpose and achievement

in the various schemes in which they are advancing the interests of the Province. With a good Government a prosperous province and a contented and happy people, we might find it profitable to consider to-day our relation to the Empire and to sister Provinces of the Dominion, our position in the greater and the lesser partnership.

OUR RELATION TO THE EMPIRE

We are all in favor of the continuance of Canada as a partner in the British Empire. We desire to see the bond of Empire made so strong that it will stand any strain that we can deem possible to it in the future; to that end each component part should be expected to fulfil its own mission with the fullest liberty of action; but while autonomy should exist among the members, we must not lose sight of the fact that the component parts must be allies, must co-ordinate when dealing with the nations of the world, and a way will be found by which the allies will speak and act as a unit. The compact which exists among the nations, dominions, provinces, commonwealths, states and colonies that make up this mighty Empire is not reduced to articles of agreement, nor can it be expressed by By-laws; the world has witnessed nothing that it parallels; other congeries of states have written constitutions, but that of the British Empire has never been and could never be expressed in writing. It has grown, often by a wise and salutary neglect, and it is still "broadening down from precedent to precedent."

This compact is more of the character of a general partnership between a number of business men than that of the connection between the shareholders of a limited liability company in which no individual shareholders have no liability beyond their contract to take and pay for shares and when that is done each

one's liability ceases. In a general partnership, such as I deem the British Empire to be, there must be absolute good faith and confidence, each member is the agent of the others when acting within the scope of the partnership, while in private affairs each one is a free agent maintaining his own separate establishment at will; but common interests have to be maintained, common rights have to be defended. There being a community of interests, there should be co-ordination of all the parts in its maintenance and defence. Each has a substantial stake in the Empire and each is the complement of the other.

I had the opportunity when the Boer War was imminent to express, in a sentence, my view of Canada's duty in that event, when the Montreal Star requested the then Mayors of the cities and towns of the Dominion to state their opinions about sending troops to Africa. It is incorporated in "The Great Events of Famous Historians." I said

"It is felt here that the Dominion, being a partner in the Empire, should bear Imperial responsibilities as well as share Imperial honors and protection."

I feel in addressing this assembly of the chosen representatives of the premier Province of the Dominion, that portion of the Empire which will in the future, I believe, be the Empire's centre and its citadel and where its capital may exist, that I am justified in alluding to the position in which Canada stands in relation to the Empire's defence, which includes Canada's own defence. If the British Navy is needed for that portion of the Empire known as Great Britain and Ireland because of the attacks of possible enemies, and, in this connection let me quote from a speech made in 1902 by Mr. Asquith, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, now Prime Minister of Great Britain: "The moment we lose com-

mand of the sea this country will be at the mercy of the enemy," it is needed equally for the defence of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Canada, for the cities of St. John and Halifax on the sea board, and Quebec and Montreal upon the St. Lawrence, for Victoria and Vancouver and Prince Rupert on the Pacific. It is needed for Canada's shipping and for her vast commerce upon the high seas, and for the safety of all those who come to and go from her sea ports. In this house this afternoon we are sitting under the protection of the British Navy, within lee of its guns. It is the chief protection of every factory and every store and every office, every farm and every man, woman and child in all this broad Dominion, which is half a continent in extent. This navy is maintained at an enormous cost; its ships, its men, its officers have been always, and are now, in indisputable superiority on the seas and are upholding beyond the risk of successful attack the Empire's commerce, its industries, and its homes, it stands fully abreast of all Imperial necessities. It is the Empire's insurance, its very existence. How long could Canada exist as a political entity without the British Navy? It would not be twelve months before it would be parcelled out among the nations; they are land hungry, and where else is there such a prize? Canada pays nothing for this defence, this insurance, and there are, I am ashamed to say, public men and public journals in this country that are willing that Canada should continue to receive, without cost to the Dominion, this protection from the overburdened taxpayers of the mother country. Canadian have come into possession of this great country through the shedding of blood and the expenditure of treasure; it is only by being willing to continue that process that we can expect to hold it.

We know what masters laid thy keel,
 What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
 Who made each mast and sail and rope,
 What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
 In what a forge and what a heat
 Were shaped the anchors of thy hope."

Let me bring the matter home in probably the most practical way in which it could be presented. Nearly every man here is more or less familiar with Bills of Lading; take one that is a receipt for goods to be forwarded by water transportation. The owners of the vessel do not in their contract undertake responsibility under all circumstances. Here are the exceptions:

"The Act of God, the King's enemies, fire, and all and every, the dangers and accidents of the Seas, Rivers and Navigation of whatever nature and kind excepted."

Mr. Speaker, the owner of the goods on board the vessel can insure against the Act of God, against fire and all the dangers and accidents of navigation, but his only insurance against the King's enemies is the King's Navy. He must pay for his other insurance; is the obligation not upon him to pay through the Dominion's treasury for the insurance which IT does not provide, but which IS provided by his fellow subjects at the heart of the Empire. I do not believe the people of this province, the people of this Dominion, will be content to continue after receiving the best farm, the greatest heritage that John Bull had to bestow, to look to him to keep up the fences and do the chores.

Canada is of age, able to make her own living and vastly more. She possesses riches beyond the dreams of avarice, possibilities in her development beyond the power of seers

to foretell. Is it honorable for her to exist on her parent's bounty?

The most middle of the middle states of the United States contribute their share to the defences necessary at the sea board, to the maintenance of the army and the navy. Is Britain's navy less to us Canadians than the American Navy is to the individual states? There is a duty that Canada has not yet performed, a responsibility she has not yet assumed, the duty that stalwart manhood dictates. The overburdened, yea the distressed, tax-payers of the old land should be relieved of that portion of the cost of the maintenance of the navy that is fairly ours. Self-respect on our part demands that we should not play the part of a mendicant. The primary obligation, the most obvious duty, which every Government owes to the people is to maintain and safeguard the national security, to uphold beyond the reach of successful attack our commerce, our industries and our homes.

What constitutes a state?

Men who their duties know, and know their rights;

And knowing, dare maintain,
 And sovereign law, that State's collected will,

Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill.

FOR CLOSER RELATIONS AND GREATER INTIMACY BETWEEN ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.

For many years I have hoped for a closer intimacy, commercially and socially, between the two old Canadian partners, known prior to Confederation as Upper and Lower Canada, now as Ontario and Quebec. They were yoked together in an uneasy union in the old days when they possessed one legislature; the friction was removed when Confederation was formed and the people of Ontario and the people of Quebec are not now antagonistic. But I would like

to see something more than neutrality, more than a mere nodding acquaintance between the oldest and greatest provinces of the Dominion. The chief barrier to our intercourse is ignorance of each other's language; that cannot be overcome entirely, because Quebec will continue to be French in language, but it can be mitigated and modified by the united action of the Governments of the two provinces in establishing and maintaining two colloquial schools, one in Toronto, where the English language can be learned by the French-Canadian among English-speaking people, and one in Montreal, where the English-speaking Canadian can acquire the French language among English-speaking people. These schools should not be for any other than the one purpose, namely, to enable any intelligent person to acquire a working knowledge of the language that he did not previously understand, and that at the cost only of living expenses in the two or three months in which he could accomplish his purpose. The results to follow such opportunities can be easily predicted. The French commercial traveller would do business in Ontario and other English-speaking provinces, while the English-speaking commercial traveller would do business in Quebec. There would be an interchange of skill and labor in the offices, in the shops and in the factories, the social intercourse would increase and be created where it does not now exist. There would be closer assimilation of the laws, and, lastly, increased respect and confidence as the result of mutual understanding.

In speaking on the subject of Commercial Education at the meeting of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire in London in July, 1906, I made a similar suggestion in these words: "The great requisite now was the knowledge of modern languages, and suggested that there should be established in Berlin and in Paris,

under British auspices, a great school of languages, so that young men from the colonies and Great Britain could obtain that colloquial knowledge so necessary in carrying on modern commerce."

A vastly easier and more feasible task would be what I suggest for Ontario and Quebec.

Ontario and Quebec were never drawn so close politically and socially as they were in the summer of 1908, during the Quebec Tercentenary celebrations, when the founding of that historic city 300 years ago by Champlain was signalized in a manner which was at once dignified and picturesque. The direct representative of the King, our popular Governor-General, was present. The Heir Apparent to the Throne was there, accompanied by the Empire's greatest soldier; France sent its commissioner; every province of the Dominion was represented and many of the oversea nations of the Empire, and our good neighbors, the great Republic to the south, especially honored the event by sending the Vice-President to participate in the various functions. During the week of the celebration, French-speaking hosts welcomed English-speaking guests, and the welcome was the sincere and cordial greeting of fellow-countrymen working with a common purpose toward a common end.

No incident of that now historic week was more gratifying to the whole province than the reception which was accorded Sir James Whitney, the representative of Ontario, by the French people of every class. He was the personal guest of Sir Lomer Gouin, the Premier, and filled always an important place at every function.

Having had in my mind for years the founding and maintaining of schools of languages, to which I have already referred, I noted particularly those men of English origin who appeared before audiences at

the celebration, who could address the people in the French language. The Prince of Wales could do it, but few visiting Canadians from other provinces attempted it. Sir James Whitney was one of the few, and I have no doubt his sentiments were good and his French beyond reproach.

It was a matter of deep regret to the members of the 15th Regiment of Belleville, who were at Quebec, as expressed in communications to the papers, that their inability to speak French was a handicap that they will always regret, and would gladly remedy, when they think of the fascinating young ladies of Quebec whom they admired, but to whom they could not communicate their feelings.

Since the celebration at Quebec we have had the pleasure and gratification of seeing the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Quebec open the great National Exhibition at Toronto, and within a few weeks past three members of the Quebec Legislature, including a member of the Government, took part in the Fish and Game convention in this city.

I like to see the flag of Canada fly on Dominion day, St. Andrew's flag on St. Andrew's day, St. Patrick's flag on St. Patrick's day, and on St. George's day I am stirred by the thought of the union of what the patron saints, St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick stand for. Shall I be less tolerant, less generous, to my Canadian countryman of French origin when on the day of St. Jean Baptiste he flings the Tricolor to the wind as an emblem of his love for the land of his forefathers?

Who made the British Empire possible in Canada? First the pioneers beginning with Jacques Cartier and those who followed him from the sunny land of France; then the British soldier, spilling British blood,

sacrificing British life and spending British treasure, the generals, if you like, but I say again the British soldier—Tommy, we call his successor now—and then the United Empire Loyalist, whose memories we revere followed by the equally grand old stock that braved the perils of the Atlantic before facing the hardships of the forest. It is well for the present generation of Canadians to think of their makers, the men who made possible for them the ownership and enjoyment of the greatest heritage, the richest patrimony on earth, and along with these possessions, think of it! we are joint owners and custodians with the old land of the family jewels, the heir looms of the race, reaching back in history a thousand years. Trial by jury, the habeas corpus, freedom of speech and of the press, the English common law, the English language, and English literature. It is well worthy to be noted that the "London Times" has just installed what is known in the newspaper world as "Our Own Correspondent" at Ottawa, another evidence of Canada's recognition at the heart of the Empire and by the Empire's greatest journal.

ONTARIO'S EFFORTS SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED ON HER OWN DEVELOPMENT.

For many years, ever since the opening of the C.P.R., we have witnessed the departure of a large portion of the best men and women, young men and residents, boys and girls, from the rural parts of the Province of Ontario to the various provinces of what is now known as Western Canada. It is well that in the early days of the great West the pioneers were drawn from Ontario stock. They are the leaven that will leaven the whole lump. They have laid the foundations of Christianity, of civilization and progress; they have established British connec-

tion and British law in the great and last new West. There will always be the ebb and flow of population, but I think the time has come when the Government and the people of Ontario should concentrate their efforts upon the advancement of the older portions of Ontario and to the development of New Ontario. The efforts of the Dominion Government and of the C.P.R. with respect to immigration have been and are now directed solely to people the West. The stream of desirable settlers has passed through our province.

No act of the present Government is more to be commended than the steps they have taken to enter seriously upon the business of securing the transfer or transplanting from Great Britain and Ireland to the Province of Ontario of farmers with more or less means WHO MEAN TO FARM, and of farm laborers who will, after learning the methods of Ontario farming, ultimately take up homesteads of their own.

We resent the appellation "colonist" when applied by public men and newspapers in the old land to residents of this country. It might be wise, as far as possible, to cease to use the word "immigrant" when alluding to the class of people whom the Province of Ontario has set out to find in the mother country. Both terms are to a certain extent opprobrious. The people of this province are here because their parents or grandparents moved from one part of the British dominions to another. Had they not made the transfer the only Canadians would have been the Indians. It is a great honor to be a native of Canada, but no native can claim any credit for the fact.

I know that lists of available properties in a good many sections of Ontario have been prepared and are being circulated among the right people in the Mother Land. This action will cause a demand and a competition for farm lands in the province that has not been noticeable of

late. This condition is somewhat singular when you think that of all the men who have goods for sale the farmer is the only man who is not obliged to advertise or drum up trade. The dealer in all his lines of produce and products are on the spot competing for the privilege of buying his goods. When it becomes known through reliable sources in the old land how fine are the opportunities offered on Ontario farms, the demand for farms will be as brisk as the demand for farm products. The business must, however, be prosecuted in the intelligent and systematic manner in which mercantile houses and manufacturers accomplish success. I would like to see the effort extended towards repatriating Ontario's sons who have gone to the States and to the Northwest.

NECESSITY FOR A RURAL CON- STABULARY ON AN EFFI- CIENT BASIS.

The inefficient condition of police protection in the rural districts of the province is frequently manifest. Life and property are constantly menaced and under present conditions there can be no improvement. The formation of a responsible Provincial Police Force, having a centre of authority in Toronto, which would train, control and direct the constables throughout the various counties is highly desirable.

MUNICIPAL SINKING FUNDS — A WISE MEASURE PASSED.

As a member who has had long continued municipal experience, which is often the stepping stone to a seat in this House, I would like to draw attention to the facilities which the Provincial Treasurer has created for dealing with sinking funds raised and set apart for amortizing or extinguishing debenture debts and to congratulate the Treasurer upon his action in such a plan had existed in

the years when the bulk of the debenture debt of the municipalities was incurred many of these municipalities which are still heavily in debt would have now a much lighter burden to carry.

Levies for sinking funds were made, but instead of being laid aside or invested and kept intact for the purpose intended, the money was expended for current purposes, in order to cut down the rate of taxation. The new arrangement enables municipalities to make it part of their contract to pay the sinking funds yearly into the treasury of the province, where the money bears interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum, compounded yearly, and it is made the duty of the Depart-

ment to make it obligatory on the part of the municipality to meet its obligations as they mature.

A witty Frenchman once said: "Doubtless the Almighty might have made a better berry than the strawberry, but doubtless he never did. I would apply this to the Dominion and say: "Doubtless the Almighty might have made a better country than Canada, but doubtless no such land exists." The land of the maple is the land for us, for our children and our children's children to the remotest generation, under the Union Jack, that is ours by inheritance as well as ours by choice; the flag that is the agent of civilization, the champion of human liberties and the defender of human rights.

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